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1500 by 1939 by 1998—These Are the Measurements of Malinche's Body: An Analysis and Review of Twentieth-Century Interpretations of Nationality

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**1500 by 1939 by 1998—These Are the Measurements of Malinche's
Body: An Analysis and Review of Twentieth-Century Interpretations
of Nationality.**

A Master's Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the American Studies Department

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

by

Ella M. Diaz

2002

Approval Sheet

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

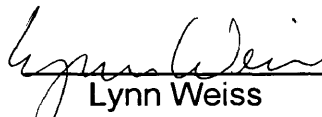


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Approved, September 2002



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Lynn Weiss



Kris Lane

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze and review early and late twentieth-century interpretations of La Malinche. A quasi-historical figure, La Malinche was a sixteenth-century indigenous woman who served the Spanish during the conquest of the Aztec empire.

Although colonial accounts and depictions of Malinche are considered accurate descriptions of the woman, no first person narratives exist. Over the last five centuries, La Malinche has been an important site for many artists concerned with issues of nationality.

In the late twentieth-century, for example, Malinche's traditional legend from Mexico was appropriated by the Chicano Student Movement, which maintained Mexico's patriarchal principles. Chicana writers, however, sought to redefine their place within the community's ethno-nationalist agenda, and rethought La Malinche accordingly.

This paper begins by briefly reviewing the colonial accounts and analyzing the traditional depictions of the figure in twentieth-century art and literature. Malinche's story deviates from the norm when an American author adapts her in order to fit his representation of nationality. Concluding with Chicana writers of the 1970s, Malinche is once again redefined, defying previous interpretations and articulating another struggle for national identity.

**1500 by 1939 by 1998—These Are the Measurements of Malinche's Body:
An Analysis and Review of Twentieth-Century Interpretations of Nationality.**

Introduction

This paper is about a myth and a legend who was also a person. The person was a sixteenth-century indigenous woman who translated native languages for Hernando Cortés while he conquered the Aztec empire. The myth and legend derive from the native woman's presumed service to Cortés, her supportive role during the conquest, and their biracial son, Martín Cortés. Known as Doña Marina to the Spanish conquistadors, the natives referred to her as "Malintzin." As time passed, "Malintzin" was interpreted by the Spanish as "Malinche." Today, La Malinche means "traitor" to people on both sides of the U.S.—Mexico border. The name's meaning developed over five centuries, through art and literature that literally and symbolically hold the native woman responsible for the conquest, as well as the mestizo culture and identity that followed.

As the myth and legend have outgrown the actual woman, I explore La Malinche as a symbol that has been used by different people for different ends. The history I tell points to how she has persisted as a prism for the complexities of colonial and post-colonial nationality and racial / ethnic identity for nearly five hundred years. Beginning with La Malinche's portrayal in Mexican art, for example, Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco's portraits of La Malinche expose Mexico's identity crisis during the early twentieth-century. Both artists' depictions intersect with Octavio Paz's paramount critique of the woman in the

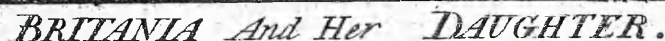
1950 essay, "Los hijos de la Malinche."¹ Attempting to debunk Mexico's colonial identity, Paz Oedipalizes

Malinche's story, transforming himself into Martin Cortés in order to address the limitations of Mexicano nationality.

Next, La Malinche's treatment in the U.S. raises complex issues about gender and national borders as La Malinche's body pushes past territorial boundaries. Non-Mexican authors use Malinche for different nationalist reasons and she becomes a permeable body through which many ideas pass. In the early twentieth-century, for example, Haniel Long, a Euro-American author living in the Southwest, revised Malinche's story and portrayed her as a classical literary heroine by comparing her to other western female protagonists.² Additionally, during the 1960s and '70s, Chicana poets used Malinche to forge a gendered sense of an ethnic community outside of Mexico. By examining three periods in which Malinche is both a solution and a problem facing different nationalisms, I reveal how the symbol of La Malinche participates in and catalyzes a larger process that conflates "national identities with women's bodies."³

Transforming the female body into a symbol of nation seems to be a universal process of nation-building. In "Romances of the Republic," for example, Shirley Samuels interrogates the uses of the female body in eighteenth-century pictorial representations of the American Revolution.⁴ Revealing how the female body becomes a contested terrain over which the British and Americans struggled, Samuels analyzes the 1780 cartoon, "Britania and Her Daughter" (Figure 1). In the picture, Britain is a Caucasian soldier woman while America is

Figure 1. "Britannia and Her Daughter. A song." (1780) Reprinted from Shirley Samuels's *Romances Of the Republic* (1996).



*My's America North, so News-paper records;
With her Mother-Britania one day had some words.
When behold Monsieur Louis, advanced a new whim,
That she should leave her Mother for to live with him.
Down Down,*

The Damsel, convinced but quickly found out,
That her Paramour was not sufficiently stout;
Besides he was poor, and she wanted five things.
So he sent to Don Carlos for Cash and Gold-rings.
Dory Doria.

*Says Monsieur to the Don, if you take my advice,
Then you of young Miss may come in for a slice;
The Don being amorous was easily brought ore,
And he Cuddled and Kyss'd as Monsieur did before.*
Dumb Don.

Britannia beheld her with tears in her eyes,
 O Daughter return to your duty she cries.
 But she replies no I'm a Woman full grown,
 And long for to keep a good house of my own.
Dorcy Down.

Published as the Act directs March 8th 1780, by L. Mills N^o 1. Rutcliff Row near the French Hospital Old Street.

If you'd used me kind when I was in your power,
I then had lived with you at this very hour.
But now on my Lovers so much do I doat,
That we'd drink and I'll help 'em to cut your old throat.
Down Down.

Then with Haxrud, and Scolding-knife Myself did advance
On one side of her Spain, on the other side France;
Britannia thus threatened does all three oppose,
And how it will end the Lord above knows,
Duty Down.

Britannia of late sent out one of her sons.
Who has given Don Carlos, a thump othe Meuns,
Knockt out Five of his Teeth, all double ones too.
And begs 'em to help Old Britannia to chew.
Darry Down.

Now for the Old Lady let all of us pray,
May Monsieur, and the Don, for their perfidy pay,
May young Mijs, return to her duty again,
And may Bortons be Free in despite of Base Men.

From Devon.

* Rodney

a native woman warrior. The artist positions the “women” at opposite ends of the picture, spatially expressing their national differences and distinct racial identities.

Samuels also contrasts eighteenth-century pictures with seventeenth-century maps, chronologically charting the artistic development of female bodies as separate nations. She writes, “At the edge of the *terra incognita* . . . was a land of women, part of the identification of newfound lands and the female body; now the focus has shifted from a land of women to the land as woman.”⁵ In eighteenth-century pictures plural lands become unitary nations once they are colonized. The shift signals that the lands are no longer collective and unidentifiable; they are no longer “women.” Rather, a single female body privatizes and encloses the land, reflecting a specific national identity. But what are we to make of Britania’s daughter being of a different race? If “America” is a native woman, and her mother is not, then she is the product of an interracial union. “America’s” father, however, is not present in the picture. His absence in this context emphasizes an overly feminine presence in British and American nationality.

Defining national space through the female body—and only the female body—brings the nation-building process back to La Malinche. She is a symbol, a metaphor, and a historical figure that embodies a specific nationalist vision. Depictions of Malinche in the indigenous *lienzos*, *codices*, and colonial representations are either interpretations or second-hand accounts. What we see are interpretations of interpretations, and not copies of an original. Since no

original pictures exist, Malinche represents the artist's relentless desire to express issues of national identity rather than to portray the actual woman.

The desire to explore issues of nationalism via Malinche continues in contemporary scholarship. In *Malinche's Conquest* (1999), for example, Anna Lanyon journeys through Mexico to find an authentic Malinche.⁶ Upon discovering a river named after the figure, Lanyon writes:

I watched this silent memorial to Malinche recede into the distance, here in this obscure place, not far from Xicalango and Potonchan, and thought how in Mexico she has been excluded from the ostentatious world of marble and alabaster statues, but she inhabits the more secluded realm of streams and gardens instead. Official memory is powerful but has its limitations.⁷

Lanyon does not find an official westernized memorial dedicated to La Malinche, but locates a river that adequately confirms her existence. In fact, Lanyon's passage suggests that the river is a more appropriate "monument" than an official acknowledgement. Perhaps Lanyon finds the river satisfactory because it adheres to the process of linking women to the land; streams and gardens are often pastoral symbols of the feminine, while statues are masculine. Regardless of her intentions, the quest to find La Malinche—an interrogation of the quest itself—remains insufficient.

The permeable boundaries of nationality, and individual desires to define it, underlie the insatiable need to reinvent La Malinche. In the Mexican imagination, she exists in a binary between La Chingada and the Virgen de Guadalupe. These female figures represent Mexico's two poles of national perception. Ramón A. Gutiérrez writes in "Community, Patriarchy, and Individualism," that the only "public models open to Mexican women were those

of the virgin and whore.”⁸ In the contradiction between Malinche (whore) and Guadalupe (virgin) lies the inhibited Mexican nationality that Octavio Paz dissects in “Los hijos de la Malinche.”⁹ Challenging the whore / virgin binary, Chicana poets attempted to create a third possibility for female identity. As such, this paper specifically analyzes the central role La Malinche’s plays in the formation of both Mexican and American national identities. Disregarding borders, the Mexican muralists, Octavio Paz, Haniel Long, and the Chicana poets, have defined, imagined, and shaped Malinche into different visions of national space.

The Biography of La Malinche

Before I analyze the work of the aforementioned artists, it is important to contextualize La Malinche in the historical accounts of Mexico. La Malinche has several names, the origins of which reveal distinct histories, vantage points, and cultural affiliations. “Malinal” and “Malintzin” express the indigenous perspective; “Doña Marina,” the baptismal name given to the indigenous woman by the Spanish, reflects a European and Christian outlook;¹⁰ and finally, “Malinche,” a Spanish transliteration of the indigenous name “Malintzin,” signifies national and racial betrayal as well as sociopolitical treachery.¹¹

Sandra Messinger Cypess in *La Malinche in Mexican Literature* (1991) asserts that “we are not sure where Malinche was born . . . nor the exact date of her birth,”¹² but most historians agree that “Malinal,” or “Malinalli,” was born around 1502 to 1503 in Painala, a province of Coatzacoalco.¹³ Messinger Cypess also mentions that her name derives from the day on which she was born—“Malinal.” In *The Conquest of Mexico: A Modern Rendering of William H. Prescott’s History* (1988), Beatrice Berler writes that Prescott was convinced Malinche’s father was a “rich cacique, [and] died when she was very young.”¹⁴ When Malinche’s mother remarried and had a son, she sold Malinche into slavery to ensure her son’s inheritance.¹⁵ According to Jerome R. Adams in *Latin American Heroes* (1991), Malinche “ended up in the possession of a cacique of Tabasco, and it is clear through her earliest years she developed two

important characteristics”: seeming noble birth and exceptional language abilities.¹⁶

With twenty other women and various “riches,” the Tabascans, as a gesture of peace, gave Malinche to Hernando Cortés after they failed to prevent the Spanish from arriving on the Yucatan mainland.¹⁷ Before baptizing her “Doña Marina,” the Spanish transliterated the Indian name, “Malintzin,” to “Malinche.”¹⁸ At this point in Malinche’s history, colonial accounts comment on her “willing” participation and role in the conquest. Messinger Cypess observes Bernal Díaz del Castillo’s influence in contemporary understanding of Malinche’s biography and involvement in the Spanish victory.¹⁹ In *The True History of the Conquest of Mexico*, Díaz depicts Malinche as a valuable weapon and ally against the native populations instead of acknowledging the fact that she was a slave woman meeting her master’s demands:

Doña Marina had by her birth a universal influence and consequence through these countries; she was of a fine figure, frank manners, prompt genius, and intrepid spirit; an excellent linguist and of most essential service to Cortes who she always accompanied. . . . Doña Marina understood the language of Guacacualco and Mexico . . . and as she could also converse with Aguilar [a Spanish captive ransomed by Cortés] in that of Tabasco and Yucatan, we thus acquired a medium of communication with the Mexican language, which was an object of great importance to us.²⁰

Despite the fact that there is no way to prove the narrative’s authenticity, Messinger Cypess and other scholars agree that Díaz’s depiction of Malinche is widely accepted in the “historical tradition of Spain and Mexico.”²¹ Díaz’s narrative voice and language reveal a figure of extreme power and independent agency: “universal influence and consequence,” and “intrepid spirit.” His word

selection and style leave no room to speculate over Malinche's role during the conquest. Indisputably, Díaz credits Malinche with agency. He implies that Malinche's character and nature determined her involvement in the conquest, and not her obligations as a slave.

Further, Díaz also describes one of the main events that have written Marina into history as "La Malinche"—the ultimate traitor. The failure of the Cholulans' planned attack on the Spanish is one of the most controversial chapters in Malinche's story.²² When the Spanish arrived at Cholula, Díaz writes that it was Malinche who discovered the Cholulans' plan to attack them and end their pursuit of Tenochtitlan:

The wife of a cacique, an old woman, who was acquainted with the plot, came secretly to Doña Marina . . . and invited her to her own house, as a place of security from the danger which was ready to overwhelm us, making at the same time a proposal to her, to accept as a husband, her son . . . Doña Marina, with a profusion of thanks, and with her usual acuteness and presence of mind, agreed to all that she proposed . . . She then obtained information of every particular of the business . . . Doña Marina, desiring this woman and her son to remain where they were and take care of her effects, hastened to Cortés, and informed him of all that had passed.²³

Learning of the news, Cortés sent for the cacique's wife and she confirmed Malinche's story.²⁴ History and popular culture hold Malinche responsible for the fate of thousands of Cholulans in the following days. Díaz notes "six thousand Cholulans were put to death on this occasion."²⁵ Leaving Malinche indirectly with blood on her hands, Díaz's narrative portrays her as a true heroine of the Spanish conquest.²⁶

Another important matter that renders Malinche the most infamous woman in Mexican history and culture is her sexual relationship with Hernando Cortés, and their “illegitimate” son, Martín Cortés. Both Mexico’s popular culture and literary elite have been obsessed with Malinche’s sexual involvement with Cortés. Although late twentieth-century perspectives on Malinche vary, an international news reporter observed in 1997 that “La Malinche, who took part in the Spanish conquest and gave birth to one of Cortés’s children, has become a symbol of a nation that is still not entirely comfortable with either its European or Indian roots.”²⁷ As the “symbol of a nation,” Malinche owes her symbolic motherhood to literature, art, and the manipulation of historical facts.

Anna Lanyon, for example, questions the accuracy of the romanticized depictions of Cortés and Malinche’s relationship.²⁸ Idealized interpretations dominate most literary perceptions:

So what was Malinche, exactly, to Cortés? Lover, mistress, concubine, whore? She has been called each and every one of these since her death, depending on the bias of the speaker or the writer. . . . Neither of them left any record of their sentiments towards one another, however. Therefore, all we can say for certain is that after July 1519 and throughout the next four years, Cortés and Malinche were frequently together. . . . And that in 1522 she bore a son to him, a child he called Martin, after his beloved father back in Spain.²⁹

By presenting the facts, or rather the absence of facts, in Malinche’s case, Lanyon reveals how the legend and myth surrounding Malinche and Cortés’s “love affair” overshadow the woman’s actual existence. Historical facts complicate the cultural and literary equations that add up to Malinche’s role as Mexico’s symbolic mother. In 1524, for example, Malinche married a Spaniard

named Juan Xaramillo while on a voyage with Cortés.³⁰ In 1526, Xaramillo and Malinche had a “legitimate” daughter, María Xaramillo.³¹ Malinche’s marriage and daughter are typically neglected in Mexico’s traditional literature and art. Lanyon’s passage suggests that artists and authors like the Mexican muralists and Octavio Paz were not motivated by historical accuracy, but Malinche’s cultural legacy, in their twentieth-century works. To Paz and the muralists, Malinche is the symbolic mother of Mexico and illegitimate mestizo identity. María Xaramillo problematizes the artists’ nationalist agendas because she legitimizes Malinche’s prescribed societal role as wife and mother. By emphasizing the alleged affair with Cortés, Malinche’s legacy as mother of Mexico reverberates in society because it reveals the possibility that she acted according to free will and desire. Thus, a nation “not entirely comfortable with either its European or Indian roots” holds Malinche accountable despite the fact that the last documented reference of her life dates to 1528.³²

Chapter One

The Mexican Tradition

Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco were Mexican painters who created murals in both the U.S. and Mexico. Critically acclaimed during the 1930s by North American and European artists, Rivera and Orozco were considered “bona fide *revolutionary* artists,” who “revived Renaissance mural techniques and on the empty walls of government buildings had painted murals of and for the people of Mexico.”³³ In this spirit, Rivera and Orozco’s “Malinche murals” informed Mexicans about their colonial past and its presence in contemporary Mexican culture. Rivera reinterpreted Malinche’s legendary treachery as the origin of modern Mexico’s apathy towards the Revolution. In Orozco’s mural, Malinche symbolized the feminization of Mexico, weak and vulnerable in the presence of her colonial counterpart—the conquistador Hernando Cortés. Both muralists claimed that Mexican identity was bound and restricted by the colonial period’s cultural and racial convergences.

The early twentieth-century was a turbulent time in Mexico, and as the Revolution gained momentum, the muralists perpetuated the cause for agrarian reform by revisiting significant moments in Mexican history. Diego Rivera’s largest mural, for example, includes Cortés and Malinche, and is located in the National Palace in Mexico City. The mural, “De La Conquista a 1930,” depicts the history of Mexico from the Conquest to 1930. It remained unfinished, however, at Rivera’s death in 1957.³⁴ Similarly, in 1923, Orozco painted “Cortés y La

Malinche,” at the National Preparatory School of Mexico, formerly the Jesuit College of San Ildefonso.³⁵ Painting numerous compositions on the walls of the school’s large patios, Orozco created “Cortés y La Malinche” on a wall under a staircase. Through these murals, Rivera and Orozco created public images that “served as the artistic vehicle for educating a largely illiterate populace about the ideals of a new society and the virtues and evils of the past.”³⁶ The ideals they celebrated were socialist visions of society, a stark contrast to the reality of life under the pre-Revolutionary dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz.

Rivera recalled in his autobiography, *My Art, My Life*, (published posthumously in 1960) that he had “seized upon every pretext to inspire [his] audience to greater revolutionary fervor.”³⁷ “De La Conquista a 1930” was no exception to Rivera’s agenda and he paid particular attention to the placement of events:

I envisioned Mexico before the Conquest: its popular arts, crafts, and legends; its temples, palaces, sacrifices, and gods. . . . I would paint the entire history of Mexico from the Conquest through the Mexican Revolution. At the triangular base, I would represent the cruelties of Spanish rule, and above that, the many struggles of my people for independence. ³⁸

Rivera’s mural revealed a succession of tensions and conflicts in Mexico. But the sequence of events was not random; Rivera’s mural emphasized that at the bottom—at the “base”—of all of Mexico’s struggles for independence was Spanish colonization.

Similar to Rivera, Orozco commented on the role the Spanish Conquest played in contemporary Mexican art and history. In autobiographical notes published in the 1940s periodical, *Excelsior*, Orozco stated:

The theme that has occupied the muralists most is the history of Mexico. Some of them have followed one faction or another of historians, others have taken their own independent line, but each of them has become a source of expert opinion and penetrating and forceful comment. This is really most remarkable. The discrepancies, from painting to painting, are a reflection of anarchy and confusion in historical studies themselves, a cause or an effect of our own personality not yet being clear in mind, however well defined it may be in behavior. Like victims of amnesia we haven't found out who we are.³⁹

Seemingly in search of a way in which to relate history, Orozco added that in Mexico "history seems to have been written throughout from the racial point of view alone."⁴⁰ Though Orozco's opinion of Mexican history reads like a critique, the mural, "Cortés y La Malinche," adheres to the "racial point of view." La Malinche and Cortés represent more than historical figures to Orozco; they embody and blur the boundaries of Mexican racial identity.

By incorporating Cortés and Malinche into their murals, Rivera and Orozco uncovered a loaded connection between the conquest and Mexico's contemporary political and cultural problems. The Spanish conquistador, for example, became Rivera and Orozco's symbol for the European upper classes in Mexico. In Rivera's mural, the image of Hernando Cortés in the midst of Mexico's twentieth-century search for a national identity reminded the public of the external forces dominating the country's culture and political system. For Orozco, the figure of Cortés articulated Mexico's color hierarchy. Malinche, however, was not as easily identifiable with Mexico's mestizo population. Though she represented the fate of indigenous peoples, she remained the cause of native oppression in Rivera and Orozco's depictions. Rivera and Orozco did not identify Mexico's agrarian and working classes with Malinche. Rather, their

interpretations of La Malinche sought to “educate” Mexicans about their role in Mexican history and to invoke aggressive opposition towards their modern oppressors. As Rivera and Orozco’s murals demanded that Mexican viewers remember the conquest, they threatened the audience with the fate of La Malinche if they failed to remember.

The wave of nationalism emerging in Mexico during the Revolutionary era imposed the threat of being considered a Malinche—or a traitor to the nation—upon the Mexican public. One was either for or against the Revolution, which ultimately meant that one was a nationalist or not. Rivera and Orozco paid particular attention to the color, scale, crevices, and positioning of Malinche’s body in relation to others in order to express the nationalist sentiment. In Rivera’s “Detalle del Arco Izquierdo,” for example, scenes from the conquest unfold on an arch at the base of a staircase (Figure 2). As Anna Lanyon puts it, Malinche stands “amid a sea of conquistadors and priests, warriors in jaguar skins, [with] ghostly penitents in their pointed hats.”⁴¹ Malinche holds a small child to her chest and, according to Lanyon, “vigilantly” glances at Hernando Cortés.⁴²

While many spectators like Lanyon assume that Malinche’s eyes rest on Cortés, the focus of her gaze is not so clear: on closer examination, Malinche is either looking at Cortés or is simply gazing off over his shoulder into an unclear distance. The uncertainty of what or who Malinche is looking at is partly due to her full-frontal depiction. With the exception of those being condemned and the early twentieth-century leaders above her, the figures surrounding Malinche are depicted from the side. Hernando Cortés’s profile, for example, suggests that he,

Figure 2



Figure 2. "De La Conquista a 1930." Pictured here is the detail of the left arc that includes Malinche. The mural by Diego Rivera is located at Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts. Reprinted from Anna Lanyon's *Malinche's Conquest* (1999).

like everyone else in the mural, is deeply immersed in the ongoing events. Juxtaposed with Malinche's full face, Cortés turns towards an indigenous man. Thus, the spectator easily determines what Cortés is looking at, while the direction of Malinche's gaze is difficult to pinpoint.

The small child clinging to Malinche in the midst of the commotion counters Lanyon's assumption that Malinche is looking at Cortés. Lanyon writes, "the child's face was buried in her dress, in an attitude of fear."⁴³ The child, possibly Martín Cortés, is obviously troubled by what he witnesses. Yet his fear does not disturb Malinche's calm gaze because she fails to acknowledge his presence. While the spectator is sure that both Cortés and his son bear witness to the mural's events, Malinche's stoic gaze incessantly asks the viewer, what is she looking at? Malinche seems undisturbed and unconcerned with the clamor around her, which suggests an alternative and potentially troubling reading of Malinche's role in the conquest: indifferent participation. Malinche's eyes are unmoved by the atrocity before her; they are unfixed, moving right over the conquistador with whom she is eternally linked. As such, she is not a visionary, but visionless. She represents the ultimate ruination of indigenous women because of her vacancy; she is both present at the conquest, and disassociated from the atrocity. Rivera's twentieth-century depiction of Malinche during the conquest informed Mexican viewers about the consequences of apathy towards the Revolution.

If Rivera's portrait of Malinche is subtly frightening because he suggests that Malinche is a visionless woman, José Clemente Orozco's painting of Cortés

and Malinche turns fear into contempt. Orozco overwhelms viewers with a mural that borders on the grotesque. Cortés and Malinche are naked and perched together on stone (Figure 3). Behind them is the future skyline of Mexico City, including the two enormous mountains, Popocatepetl and Iztaccíhuatl. Below Cortés and Malinche lies the limp body of an indigenous man. The color contrast between the skyline, Malinche, and the native male with Cortés is startling. Cortés's lack of pigmentation makes his skin glow, and his rigid features suggest that he has been carved out of the stairwell—not painted on it. Clutching Malinche's hand in his, Cortés drapes the other arm over Malinche's naked body. Lanyon, who also visited Orozco's mural, asks, "is [Cortés] restraining or protecting her?"⁴⁴ In the context of the conquest, the conquistador's gesture does both. Cortés's rigid and unbending arm symbolizes the birth of New Spain because, like a planted flag, it claims Malinche's body. Cortés protects his "new territory" as he steps on the hand of the limp native man below him, restricting native (male) insurrection.

Cortés's dual action—one hand protecting Malinche's body while his foot restrains the native male—constructs an androcentric portrait of nationalism. The image also feminizes the colonized people. In *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender And Sexuality In The Colonial Conquest* (1995), Anne McClintock writes that "all too often in male nationalisms, gender difference between women and men serves to symbolically define the limits of national difference and power between men."⁴⁵ Cortés keeps the territory, and not Malinche, out of the reach of the native male. As Malinche's skin tone matches the skyline and that of the native

Figure 3



Figure 3. "Cortés y La Malinche." The mural by Jose Clemente Orozco is located at the National Preparatory School in Mexico. Reprinted from Anna Lanyon's *Malinche's Conquest* (1999).

male, she reveals Orozco's "racial point of view." The color contrast between Malinche and Cortés symbolizes their "national difference."

While the color coordination between the native bodies and the skyline expresses their inextricable connection, Cortés separates them from one another. As such, Malinche occupies her own space, suggesting her vulnerability to Cortés's authority. In this light, Malinche's submissive demeanor—her lowered eyes, rounded shoulders, and her free hand loose and open—reveals that her insubordination is not Cortés's immediate threat. Malinche as Mexico is what Cortés tries to maintain and protect; she is not who he struggles with. The national danger for Cortés in Orozco's mural is clearly male vs. male.

Moreover, Orozco paints Cortés's vividly white arm as a part of Malinche's body. The inclusion of the white and stony arm in Malinche's torso defines Mexico as a three-armed woman. Malinche as Mexico is a freakish entity both protected by its own destruction and restrained by an additional appendage. The limp native male body below Malinche creates a vertical measure of progress. As Malinche sits on a crude pedestal of western civilization, Cortés's strategically placed foot guards against "regression."

Lanyon reads this obvious hierarchical symbol of progress as "the artist's own defiant, public memorial to this illicit mother of modern Mexico."⁴⁶ Although I agree that the positioning of the native male in relation to Malinche does convey the notion of modernity, I question whether its intention is defiance. Rather than defiance, Orozco paints the "reality" of Mexican nationality built upon the

subordination of native (male) society, and elevated through the conquered female body. This “reality” is repeatedly dealt with in the writings of Octavio Paz.

Originally published in 1950, *El laberinto de la soledad* (1961) is considered to be Octavio Paz’s most prized work. In it, Paz attempts to expose and critique the modern Mexican’s emulation of western culture and the colonial history that haunts Mexican national identity.⁴⁷ Similar to Rivera and Orozco’s murals, Paz locates many of the anxieties that impede the development of Mexican nationality in the figure of La Malinche. The title of his essay, “Los hijos de la Malinche,” reveals that Paz deems the struggle masculine.

Paz’s title foreshadows a discourse that negates the role of Mexicanas in the construction of a powerful Mexican national identity. Anticipating McClintock’s argument that male nationalisms are symbolically enacted between male and female gender differences, Paz claims that La Malinche is the source of powerlessness in Mexicano identity. In his interpretation of the meaning of “La Chingada” (literally “the fucked”) Paz conveys how the current state of Mexican nationalism is perpetuated by an excessive female presence:

If the *Chingada* is a representation of the violated Mother, it is appropriate to associate her with the Conquest, which was also a violation, not only in the historical sense but also in the very flesh of Indian women. The symbol of this violation is doña Malinche, the mistress of Cortés. It is true that she gave herself voluntarily to the conquistador, but he forgot her as soon as her usefulness was over. Doña Marina becomes a figure representing the Indian women who were fascinated, violated or seduced by the Spaniards. And as a small boy will not forgive his mother if she abandons him to search for his father, the Mexican people have not forgiven La Malinche for her betrayal. She embodies the open, the *chingado*, to our closed, stoic, impassive Indians.⁴⁸

Disregarding the possibility that Indian men were also “fascinated, violated or seduced” by Spanish power and culture, Paz locates the central violation of the conquest and its aftermath in the body, “the flesh,” of native women. Creating an image of a vulnerable and “open” female body, Paz implies that the weakness of Mexican identity derives from its victimized conception. Paz further likens the Mexican people to a “small boy,” angry with his mother for her preference of the father. The “small boy” who prefers the mother to the father has not reached manhood, and remains incapable of emancipation because of his obsession with the compromised mother.

Emma Pérez explores Paz’s notion of the dysfunctional Mexican “boy” in *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas Into History* (1999). Specifically addressing the prevalence of Oedipal anxiety in Chicano identity, Pérez’s argument easily transfers to Mexican identity:

I find a mestizo Oedipus after the colonization of the Americas by Spain. By devising a model that I called the Oedipal Conquest Triangle (or Complex) with Hernando Cortés, Malintzin Tenepal (La Malinche), and Octavio Paz as imaginary son to the white colonizer father Cortés and Indian mother Malinche, I argued that Oedipus had invaded the Chicano/a consciousness through these imaginary historical metaphors, through this language of conquest.⁴⁹

Pérez suggests that Paz assumes the position of Martin Cortés, and self-consciously writes as the “mestizo Oedipus.” Paz bitterly employs the “language of conquest,” revealing his subject position as the “small boy” who cannot come to terms with his estranged mother. Like a dysfunctional colonial family, Paz struggles with the female body in his resentment as the mestizo son. He claims that Malinche like Mexico was “open” to invasion, and consequently, displaced

Indian masculinity. Paz's resentment implicitly conveys that the true violation of the conquest was Malinche's preference for Cortés's (white) body, and not her mestizo son's (nonwhite) body; and yet, of course, if she had not preferred the white body, Paz would not exist.

Failing to reconcile with his mother's preference, Paz presents Malinche as both victim and seductress in the passage. Further, Paz makes an empirical argument that Malinche "gave herself voluntarily to the conquistador," and betrayed her people because of her inevitable nature.⁵⁰ But it is not only Malinche's nature that Paz condemns; he writes that Malinche's vacillating nature is the "cruel incarnation of the feminine condition."⁵¹ Claiming that all Mexicanas are "open" to western cultural violations, Paz argues that women biologically inherit Malinche's traitorous legacy. As Sandra Messinger Cypess notes, Paz "posits an innate feminine vulnerability that transforms all women into 'Chingadas.'"⁵²

Although Messinger Cypess's point is valid, the "innate feminine vulnerability" that Paz purports does not exclusively pertain to women. Paz refers to what regards as an overly feminine presence within *Mexicano* nationalism. He writes, "[Malinche] embodies the open *chingado*." In the last sentence of the passage, Paz changes the word's suffix to "o," switching the feminine connotation to masculine. As Jean Franco states in "La Malinche: From Gift to Sexual Contract," Paz's essay is an "attempt to sublimate the very specific ideological struggle into a national psychodrama of masculine aggression and the victimization not only of women but the feminine in all of us."⁵³ Similar to

Orozco's mural, Paz reveals that Mexican nationality is physically and sexually fragmented due to the Spanish conquest, which emasculated native men, and produced a feminized (colonized) reality. He makes this vividly clear when he concludes, "The Mexican and his Mexicanism must be defined as separation and negation. And, at the same time, as a search, a desire to transcend this state of exile."⁵⁴ The operative pronoun here is "his," reflecting Paz's title and the belief that Mexicanismo is "naturally" the domain of the male.

As Paz designates Mexican national identity masculine, and claims that the obstacles inhibiting Mexican nationality are feminine, these feminine barriers continue to obstruct Mexicanos in the twentieth-century. Paz notes "the success of the contemptuous adjective *malinchista* recently put into circulation by the newspapers to denounce all those who have been corrupted by foreign influences."⁵⁵ Enduring four centuries—from the conquest to the 1950s—Malinche persisted as a source and consequence of national and cultural violations.

Thinking through Paz's critique of mid-twentieth-century Mexico with Emma Pérez's *Oedipal Conquest Triangle* in mind, Mexican nationality remains stagnant because of the fear and anger contemporary Mexicanos feels towards their symbolic mother. Paz reveals that the dysfunctional colonial family continues to stifle Mexicano identity when he states that (in the 1950s, at least) "*malinchista*" represents Mexicans corrupted by "foreign influences." The fact that Paz did not specifically name the "foreign influences" raises several questions: Are the "foreign influences" new to the twentieth-century? Are they the presence

of other countries in Mexico? Or are they the very same influences (the men) to whom Malinche succumbed? Not specifying to whom or what he refers, Paz reduces the importance of the “foreign influences.” Though they may have changed over time, those who are “influenced” remain identifiably female—malinchistas. As Mary Louise Pratt writes, “the terms *malinche* and *malinchista* survive in Mexican vernacular as derisive terms meaning ‘traitor’ . . . Notice too the inherent sexism: whether [treachery is] committed by man or woman, betrayal is coded in the language as female.”⁵⁶ During the 1950s, cultural and economic weaknesses in Mexico were figured through Malinche’s sexual “weakness;” moreover, according to Paz, the possibility of new “foreign influences” did not threaten Mexican nationality. Rather, the act of succumbing, the treachery itself, stifled Mexican nationality. Those who succumbed are “malinchistas;” they are women.

Paz’s construction of femininity as inherently treacherous relies upon the absence of the male, or the colonial father. In his absence, the “symbolic mother” dominates the national space, and her overwhelming presence is the detrimental force ruining (male) attempts at Mexican national identity. Paz does nothing new here; he participates in an ongoing discourse where the female body is literally a national health risk and must be expunged in order to survive. Thus, his essay fits neatly into Shirley Samuels’s “Romances of the Republic” where she reviews the ways in which the female body is used in sixteenth-century engravings and eighteenth-century caricatures of early America. Paz’s written denouncement of Malinche’s dominance in Mexican nationality echoes how Philipp Galle’s

sixteenth-century engraving, "America," exaggerates the female body's threat to masculinity (Figure 4). The Indian woman in Galle's picture carries a spear in one hand and a man's head in the other. The native woman is femininity in excess: not only is she the dominant figure in the picture, but she achieves this dominance through the dismemberment of the male body. "America" threatens her viewers as she nonchalantly carries the man's head while stepping over his severed arm. The hand of the dismembered arm clutches an axe, and the quills to the right of his limb suggest that "America" has defeated the (male) opposition. "America," the female body, represents national power and control.

Yet her national body hardly conveys feminist empowerment. Samuels writes that Galle's engraving makes it "necessary to imagine this threatening Indian woman's body in order to justify slaughtering the bodies of those she represents."⁵⁷ The rationale for eradicating native peoples is based upon the perception of "America" as a predatory female. "America" as disproportionately female perfectly articulates the national anxiety that Octavio Paz explores through *La Malinche*. Galle's "America" shows the act of dismantling masculinity, while Paz's "La Chingada" concentrates on the aftermath, or the absence of masculinity. Both are missing the colonial father. Like "Britania and Her Daughter," Galle and Paz avoid the symbolic father in their interpretations of different nationalities.

Figure 4



Figure 4. "America." (ca. 1581—1600). Engraving by Philipp Galle.
Reprinted from Shirley Samuels's "Romances of the Republic"
(1996).

Chapter Two

American Revision

So where is the colonial father—the “foreign influences” to whom “malinchistas” succumb? Where is Cortés in Paz’s critique of Mexican nationality? The colonial father re-enters the body politic in Haniel Long’s text, *Malinche (Doña Marina)* (1939). In thirty-three short pages, Haniel Long inverts the typical Malinche story, fashioning a heroine out of Mexico’s most infamous woman. Moreover, Long’s short novel supports Emma Pérez’s “Oedipal Conquest Triangle.” While Paz represents the dysfunctional mestizo son, Long substitutes as colonial father because Malinche becomes his desirous female—the Other half of his American national identity. The ultimate intersection between the works of Paz and Long, however, is not their quasi father-son relationship. Rather, their uses of Malinche’s body—Paz deems her “open,” while Long “reclodes” her—result in similar androcentric national rhetorics.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and educated at Philips-Exeter Academy and Harvard, Long produced poetry and a book of “fairytale-like stories” entitled, *Notes for a New Mythology* (1926). After moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico, Long released *Walt Whitman and the Springs of Courage* (1938).⁵⁸ In 1939, Long published *Malinche (Doña Marina)*, and drew a national line between U.S. citizens and Mexicans. In the Santa Fe region where indigenous cultures and Mexican ancestry prevailed, the title *Malinche* was not only recognizable, but carried specific connotations. Long, however, negated local

understanding because he placed the Spanish baptismal name, *Doña Marina* directly after *Malinche*. The second half of the title conveys Long's assumption that *his* audience is not familiar with Malinche or the issues that surround her. Furthermore, the parenthetical (*Doña Marina*) works like a disclaimer, anticipating the western discourse that infiltrates Malinche's story.

The text of *Malinche (Doña Marina)* begins with Malinche a few days before Cortés's arrival in 1519, and their subsequent journey to Tenochtitlan. Attempting a more introspective version of Malinche's life, the book is formatted like a diary, revealing Malinche's personal thoughts, growing love for Cortés, and dreams for the future. *Malinche (Doña Marina)* concludes a few days after the conquistadors endure a fatal counterattack, La Noche Triste, and before they conquer the Aztec Empire in 1521. A seventeen-page epilogue directly follows the fictitious account.

Interestingly, the epilogue supports the reading of Long's loaded title. He announces that the first-person narrative is a comparative analysis between Malinche, Medea, and Jeanne d' Arc:

[Malinche] is no purely legendary figure, like Helen of Troy or Electra. Among great heroines her place is more like that of Jeanne d' Arc; though in part legendary, she is ruggedly historical. . . . To compare the Medea of Euripedes with Malinche affords one a closer view of the Indian girl. Medea made many sacrifices for Jason and when he dropped her she became insanely embittered. Her help to Jason had been help to a *man* first and last; . . . Malintzin from the beginning had had an intense interest in Cortés by virtue of what she expected him to do for her country. . . . We do not see Jeanne d' Arc clearly in relationship to a man, but like Malintzin she acted for religion and for love of native country.⁵⁹

Long makes sense of Malinche by declaring that she is not only a great American character in history, but an important American character of the Southwest. In his 1974 critique of *Malinche (Doña Marina)*, Bert Almon superficially addressed the western structure of the text when he claimed that Long “works with figures who do not have great currency in the United States, but whose stories are open to mythical interpretation.”⁶⁰ From a western standpoint, Malinche’s body is “open” to analysis, and Long’s “mythical interpretation” transforms Malinche into a western canonical figure. Drawing on classical literature, Long exploits Malinche as an unlimited resource for imagining American nationality.

In the passage from the epilogue, for example, Long claims that Malinche’s interest in Cortés derived from her national expectations and, like Jeanne d’ Arc, she acted out of her love of country. Yet this notion of nationhood does not easily transfer to Malinche because nationalism did not exist in the sixteenth-century amongst native peoples. In fact, there were many different indigenous communities, and the only extensive empire was that of the Aztecs. Malinche was not an Aztec, and under Aztec rule she was a slave.⁶¹ These facts completely undermine Long’s comparison of Malinche with Jeanne d’ Arc. As for Medea, according to legend, she *chose* to forsake her father and run away with Jason, while Malinche was presented to the Spanish as a slave.⁶² Malinche did not choose her role in the conquest, and the extent to which she complied with her contractual obligation remains unclear. Despite the accepted historical facts, Long insists on Malinche’s agency as a proto-nationalist.

Long diverges from historical accuracy, producing fiction full of (American) nationalist rhetoric in order to maintain his cross-cultural comparisons. When the “white men” land on the coast, Malinche says to herself and readers, “I want my country to grow, to be fine enough for all who ever come to it. I rise and begin dancing without knowing why.”⁶³ Malinche’s inexplicable dancing evokes the psychic powers of Jeanne d’ Arc, who was condemned for these abilities, and two hundred years later recognized as a saint.

Yet Long subtly deviates from European traditions of female martyrs and visionaries in his depiction of Malinche because she is not a European woman. Rather, Malinche’s body is physically affected by the arrival of the Spanish. The idea that Malinche is the same as Jeanne d’ Arc, but not quite, raises Homi Bhabha’s theoretical analysis of colonial mimicry.⁶⁴ As Anne McClintock describes it, “mimicry is a flawed identity imposed on the colonized people who are obliged to mirror back an image of the colonials but in imperfect form: ‘almost the same, but not white.’”⁶⁵ As such, Long presumes Malinche’s “almost . . . but not” status as a pagan native unfamiliar with Christianity by limiting the similarities between her and Jeanne d’ Arc. Malinche can “feel” Cortés drawing near, but ultimately is not European. Aware of his own American (white) nationality, Long holds in place certain notions about who is (and who is not) a representation of U.S. nationalism. This reading is confirmed when Long creates a psychic realm in which Malinche delivers a highly pastoralized depiction of the indigenous world.

The description Malinche offers of native life prior to contact is overtly feminine, naturally sexual, and eerily implies that this exotic way of life is passing:

Through a gigantic cedar hung with many vines comes an aromatic breeze, moist, and frank with the mystery of wild love. I am picking berries where great moths flutter in the late-slanted sun. . . . This morning at the well I saw my old nurse . . . My eyes blur looking at my old nurse. She is a Mayan idol, calm and sacred.⁶⁶

Malinche's vivid imagery and exotic details sexualize the tropical lands. The "aromatic breeze," wet with the mystery of "wild love" anticipates impregnation. It is no coincidence that Malinche is also ripe, picking the berries around her. The description relies on what McClintock deems "porno-tropics." Like the figure "America" in the sixteenth-century engraving by Theodore Galle, Malinche figuratively "extends an inviting hand, insinuating sex and submission."⁶⁷ In both cases, the native woman represents the land waiting to be conquered by the European.

Interestingly, in Long's passage, both Malinche and the land *anticipate* the arrival of the Spanish. Neither Malinche nor the land need their actual presence, but feel them drawing near. Long's language makes the Europeanizing (colonial) process natural. He ties Malinche's anticipation to the visionary mysticism of Jeanne d' Arc, but maintains her indigenous "limitations." Malinche is more like the land than Jeanne d' Arc; her physical stimulation is directly rooted in the "aromatic" breezes of the earth, and not in Christianity.

Additionally, Malinche's nurse seen through blurred eyes as a Mayan figurine not only implies that she is a memory from Malinche's childhood, but also a premonition of the future. The "Mayan idol" is one of the many kitsch items that

tourists bring back from the exotic land of Mexico. Once conquered and colonized, native cultures and life are reduced to memorabilia and vacation keepsakes. The ability to foresee Mexico's future seemingly connects Malinche to Jeanne d' Arc's; but the ability is actually Long's authorial voice seeping into the narrative.

As such, Malinche is not her own psychic vessel, but rather Long's mouthpiece. Writing in 1939, Long was surrounded by the Indian arts and crafts movement directed by Euro-American transplants. In her text, *Engendered Encounters: Feminism and Pueblo Cultures, 1879—1934* (1999), Margaret D. Jacobs offers a wide-ranging analysis of the changing attitudes towards Pueblo cultures and art in the US. Examining earlier studies of "white elites who patronized Indian arts in the southwest," Jacobs explores the women who supported the movement:

Those most commonly associated with the movement were preservationists who sought to revive 'high-quality,' 'traditional' Indian art as a means to insulate the Pueblos from modern America. Many antimodern feminists participated in this endeavor . . . antimodern feminism feared that mass tourism acted as a corrupting force on the Pueblos and their art. Instead, they sought a small, elite market for Indian art.⁶⁸

Long's description of Malinche's nurse mimics the preservationists that Jacobs critiques. As a resident of New Mexico, and most likely a member of the "elite market for Indian art," Long fails to acknowledge his own appropriation of Malinche's story when he critiques "mass tourism" and its culturally damaging effects. He passes off personal opinions as prophetic dialogue in *Malinche (Doña Marina)*.

Returning to his nationalist theme, but maintaining Malinche as a vessel for self expression, Long exceeds all expectations for Malinche's nationalism when he delivers her account of the Spanish massacre at Cholula. Malinche states, "Cholula—where once the Cornsilk God lived and taught people to think how to make this world a better place to live in—Cholula, where now each year they sacrifice countless victims on countless altars. Cholula the treacherous."⁶⁹ The events at Cholula are key factors in the cultural production of Malinche as the ultimate betrayer of Mexico. Because of her actions at Cholula and the defeat of the city's residents by Cortés and his allies, Malinche is written into history as the traitor of Mexico's indigenous peoples.

But what is to be made of Long's passage? Malinche's description of Cholula before the massacre invents a godless (un-Christian) people who have fallen from native grace. According to Malinche, the Cholulans were already dead in a sense, practicing bloody sacrifice on a victimized population. Their once pristine and natural religion had turned on itself in acts of self-consumption. Malinche's description insinuates that their massacre will produce a rebirth or regeneration through Christianity.

Furthermore, the word "treacherous" does not imply religious betrayal; rather it suggests national and political infidelity. Long purposely chooses for Malinche to say, "Cholula the treacherous," instead of "sacrilegious," "demonic," or "heathenish" because it associates Cholula with nations that oppose democracy. The association is awkward because once again there was no collective sense of nationalism amongst sixteenth-century native peoples. Yet

Malinche's use of "treacherous" with regard to others redeems her, since her name in modern Mexican culture means "the traitor." Long inverts who stands for what—Cholulans as traitors and Malinche as nationalist—in order to maintain his literary comparisons. The switching of terms displaces Malinche's treachery onto the Cholulans, conveying that they have lost their way while Malinche remains true. The "way" that Malinche has maintained is Christianity.

The Cholulans as "treacherous" also reveals the twentieth-century context in which Long wrote. *Malinche (Doña Marina)* was published at the onset of World War II. The passage by today's standards resembles war propaganda, political justification for imperialism, and the religious indoctrination of native peoples. Yet it also mirrors the political issues sweeping the U.S. in the early twentieth-century. Examining art movements during this period, Patricia Hills cites the origins of cultural nationalism and racialism in *Modern Art in the USA: Issues and Controversies of the 20th Century* (2001). While artists in New York were "drawn to the internationalism of Marxism," a growing shift towards Regionalism emerged in the works of Midwest painters.⁷⁰ Hills writes that Regional painters like Thomas Hart Benton "rejected European modernism and sought to establish an 'American' art, based on the history and customs of Anglo-America."⁷¹ The 1920s and '30s wave of nationalistic and militaristic totalitarianism—a.k.a., fascism—prompted artists like Benton to promote a "nativist agenda" in their paintings and murals.⁷²

In the midst of this political climate, Haniel Long's *Malinche (Doña Marina)* represents the Midwestern move towards Regionalism. Unquestionably,

the Cholulans in Long's text evoke notions of the fascist Other. An initial comparison of Benton and Long seems to position the artists on opposing political sides, since Long's portrait of an American heroine is a foreign Other. Yet the two artists intersect because they both seek to establish a regional (American) identity: Benton pursues the character and culture of the Midwest, while Long attempts to nationalize the Southwest region. Moreover, Long appropriates, and subsequently, assimilates the "foreign" figure—he makes Malinche *one of us*—in order to announce his "American" response to fascism. How can a quasi-mythical Mexican woman represent Long's national politics? Quite easily: Malinche exudes American nationalism because Long rewrites the national boundaries of her physical body.

The relationship between Malinche and Cortés unmasks Long's national redemption of the foreign figure because he revirginizes Malinche's body. Long obscures the sexual exchange between Cortés and Malinche because it does not fit his interpretation of her as a national martyr. Almon writes that Long downplays their sexual relationship because "what interests him is the element of disunion in the story, and the ability of the two protagonists to work together even when the sexual element in their relationship becomes secondary."⁷³ Neglecting the possibility that Malinche and Cortés did not have an equal work relationship, Almon claims that what the "two protagonists" work towards, but fail to achieve, is a "union of the best elements in two cultures."⁷⁴ Ironically, Almon fails to consider Cortés and Malinche's mestizo son, Martín Cortés, as the "union of the best elements" between two cultures. Almon disregards Martín because he is

essentially absent from Long's text. Long briefly mentions him (but not by name) on the second to last page of the novel when Malinche says, "And I shall bear my lord his babe."⁷⁵

Long neglects Martín Cortés because he hinders Malinche's development as a virtuous and national visionary. Martín represents the consequence of the used female body as well as the sexual purpose Malinche fulfilled during the conquest. Instead of sexual intercourse, Long depicts religious experiences between Cortés and Malinche. Malinche's chastity is important to Long's nationalist objective. Malinche's body must be closed, and Martín Cortés must be erased, in order for Long to reimagine the conquest as an acceptable and pure struggle for western colonization.

The night before La Noche Triste, for example, when the Spanish fled Tenochtitlan and suffered many fatalities, Cortés and Malinche come together in what seems to be a sexual act:

The days go by faster and faster, they blur; all nights blur—and in this blurring Cortés recurs with demands on my pity and on my faith. His caress is fevered. We pause for a second in the shadow of death; then we go forward and are blurred again. He has just left me—he came, he went, in a whirlwind. But I opened the locket about his neck.

"Why?" he asked me.

"I need to see again the Mother and the Child you bring to us."⁷⁶

Long's reference to sexual intercourse is inextricably linked to Christianity.

Malinche's closing statement keeps their exchange spiritual because it is ultimately a contemplation on the Virgin Mary and the immaculately conceived savior. This brings new meaning to Malinche's only mention of Martín Cortés:

"And I shall bear my lord his babe." Malinche implies that the child she carries for

her “lord” Cortés is similar to the child the Virgin Mary delivers to the world for God. Martín’s conception not only obscures illicit images of Malinche’s fleshy body by symbolizing the birth of Christianity in New Spain, but also collapses Mexico’s national binary between the Virgen de Guadalupe and La Chingada.

Long also alludes to Psalm 23 in the passage and strengthens his depiction of Malinche as a religious vessel. Malinche’s lines, “We pause for a second in the shadow of death; then we go forward and are blurred again,” sound very similar to “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death; I will fear no evil.” Cortés and Malinche’s union is physically spiritual, a communion that nourishes their religious (con)quest. Psalm 23 goes on to state, “for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff will comfort me.” As Malinche and Cortés are “blurred again” the Spanish “rod” and “staff” ensure the physical, sexual, and spiritual procreation of Christianity through the native female body.

Long limits Malinche’s understanding of the spiritual exchange, however, and once again raises Bhabha’s idea of colonial mimicry. Although Malinche is a messenger of Christianity, she is, after all, a native woman. In the closing passage, Long reminds readers that though Malinche is similar to Jeanne d’ Arc, she is not the same:

To me, gold colored flowers mean timelessness, and the come and go of the streams that are eternity. I wish that Cortés might gaze at these golden flowers in the red fields and see them . . . But there are things about the Mexican earth Cortés will never see, though an old man who is blind and full of days sees them perfectly. So this quiet moment it is beside Xicotenga that I am standing . . . seeing the rain of autumn filling the golden flowers of the Tlascalcan fields.

With the exception of a few negligible moments of doubt, Malinche supports Cortés and the conquest throughout the entire text. Yet in the last passage Malinche returns to a pastoralized description of the fleeting native world. Long suggests that though Malinche represents a purpose far greater than herself, she is ultimately unaware of the enlightenment she represents. Like Diego Rivera's image of Malinche as vacant and passive, Long limits Malinche's self-perception. In Long's text, Malinche is a natural entity, and consequently, returns to native (pagan) understandings of the natural world.

Further, Long places Malinche next to Xicotenga, the Tlascalán chief and ally of the Spanish, and seemingly plays with the idea of re-balancing the severed native world: native man and native woman are reunited. Xicotenga, however, is a weak link; he is the feminized native male—both blind and old. Xicotenga fails to represent the restoration of the native world because he is the opposite of regeneration. Rather his ability to see without seeing reflects Long's classical literary style. Almon recognizes Xicotenga as a "kind of Tiresias, a blind seer who provides Malinche with a deeper understanding of her situation."⁷⁸

As a classical literary figure, Xicotenga delivers the nationalist message permeating Long's text. When Malinche turns to him for comfort over Cortés's disinterest in the natural world, Xicotenga replies:

If he were a man a woman could love completely . . . Cortés would not be the man to destroy the Aztec. . . . The man-spirit is to the woman-spirit as a thing that lives calling to another thing that lives, and one has to love all things that are real. Accepting Cortés thus, you accept his man-spirit, and have done no evil.⁷⁹

Though Xicotenga's prophecy is draped in native terms—"man" and "woman-spirit"—the fate trope is clear. Like Oedipus, Malinche is a part of a destiny that cannot be avoided. Moreover, Xicotenga's pardoning of Malinche for her role in the conquest alienates both figures from their historical contexts. "You have done no evil" is not the omen of a Tlascalan chief; rather it is the voice of a Euro-American confessing his belief in manifest destiny.

With the conclusion of Malinche's first-person narrative in mind, I return to Long's extensive epilogue and argue that it recolonizes the colonized woman's body because it confirms his desire to inscribe Malinche in European mythology and meaning. Once Malinche, the indigenous woman, "tells" her story, a Eurocentric perspective frames her. Regardless of "who" is read first, the epilogue is always present, voicing and *voicing over* the native woman's already artificial voice.

Long begins his epilogue by telling readers who, or rather what, Malinche is; Long pronounces—decides—Malinche's historical value. This is an odd move since readers have most likely finished Malinche's story, suggesting that Long does not trust the literary Malinche to represent his analysis by implication:

Malinche is an important and interesting gift to human consciousness from the history of the New World. She engages us with life-problems of primary interest, first, as a daughter of a particular moment of history, and then, since she represents more than any one moment of history can hold, as one of the daughters of eternity.⁸⁰

Spaced between blank pages, Long's epilogue, entitled "Regarding Malinche," follows Malinche's preface and story. Long uses the epilogue and Malinche's first-person narrative to create the impression that there are two stories, two

voices, and two perspectives present in the book. Separating Malinche into two halves—a historical subject and an authentic speaker—the epilogue’s title implies that it contains critical thoughts on the subject of Malinche.

Bert Almon acknowledges Long’s desire “not only to tell the story but also interpret it. His narrator can give us a critique of the men and cultures she confronts, but she cannot tell us the meaning of her own role in terms of Western myth and literature.”⁸¹ Malinche cannot “tell us” her own value in “western myth and literature” because without Long she has no western value. He writes in his epilogue that Malinche is part “legendary” but also “ruggedly historical.” He makes this claim based upon the supposed veracity of several historians of the conquest. Yet Bernal Díaz’s colonial account makes it clear that Malinche is an interpreted body. There is no Malinche without the ideas and opinions about her. Long participates in her ongoing construction when he visually and verbally separates Malinche’s narrative and his epilogue. He creates an imagined world where Malinche truly speaks and he has listened. But he does not listen objectively. Long places Malinche in a literary tradition that isolates her from indigenous cultures and Mexican history, making the unfamiliar (the Other) recognizable within his own culture. Long recolonizes Malinche, *taming* her native body by clothing her in contexts that suit western preferences.

Chapter Three

Chicana Malinche

Until the late 1960s, La Malinche had been predominantly a male project. From the Mexican muralists and Octavio Paz, to American writers like Haniel Long, the myth and legend of La Malinche were truly androcentric concoctions for treating or solving national ailments. In a sense, Malinche had been “man-handled” for over five hundred years. Both a national and transnational body, Malinche was not simply the alleged obstacle facing certain inchoate identities. She was also a way in which to restrict female nationality. Paz, for example, claimed that Malinche’s traitorous nature was the “cruel incarnation of the feminine condition.”⁸² Similar to the portrayals of Malinche by the Mexican muralists, Paz alleged that Mexican nationality was too female, and therefore he called for the exclusion of Mexican women in the creation of a strong national identity.

Long wrote the Malinche legend a different way, spinning the events that led to her fate as the ultimate traitor of Mexico’s native peoples. In Long’s text, Malinche becomes a beacon of manifest destiny and all of her supposed wrongs are recoded as western justifications for imperialism. By changing the story, Long’s Euro-American myth overshadows the Mexican myth, and yet Malinche remains voiceless, absent in the new nationalism. In other words, while Long’s Malinche is very different from that of Paz and the muralists, she is nevertheless man-made. The male realm of Mexican nationality that Paz communicates

through La Malinche and Long imports in his version of her story marks the point at which contemporary Chicanas entered the dialogue. The image of Malinche in male hands had reached its limits, becoming somewhat sterile. The Chicana writers, however, created an entirely new incarnation and breathed life into the misused literary body.

The reworking of Malinche by Chicana writers has differed from the male depictions. Chicanas used Malinche to forge a gendered sense of an ethnic community *outside* of Mexico rather than to alienate the feminine from national identity. Chicana writers challenged the androcentric nationalism that they inherited by reworking Malinche from the inside out. Responding to the patriarchy and sexism prevalent in the Chicano Student Movement, Chicanas embraced the very figure that solidified their national marginalization. Consequently, they repositioned themselves within their own ethno-nationalist discourse. Literally between two nationalities—Mexico and the U.S.— Chicanas resemble Malinche's permeability on both sides of the border. As Ramón A. Gutiérrez puts it, "For activist Chicanas the historical representations of Malinche as a treacherous whore who betrayed her own people were but profound reflections of the deep-seated misogynist beliefs in Mexican and Mexican-American culture."⁸³ Chicanos of the Movement exalted the traditional understandings of La Malinche as well as the pre-Columbian assumptions of a male-centered nationalism. As Vicki L. Ruiz acknowledges:

The image of the "warrior" struck a chord with "[the Movement's] ferociously macho imagery." While noting that the idea of a Brown nation (or Aztlán) offered a "taster of self-respect," long-time community activist

Betita Martínez argues that merely as a symbol the concept of *Aztlán* encourages the association of machismo with domination.⁸⁴

If the Chicano Student Movement's appropriation of pre-Columbian imagery empowered Chicanos, it rendered Chicanas powerless. The notion of *Aztlán*, for example, was not simply a national "home-base" for the community. Rather, according to Martínez, the homeland was also a masculine space—a male realm of Chicano nationality.

The playwright Luís Valdez, for example, shaped popular perceptions of *La Malinche* in the Chicano community with his 1971 play, "The Conquest of Mexico." According to Gutiérrez, Valdez "depicted Malinche as a traitor because: 'not only did she turn her back on her own people, she joined the white men and became assimilated.'"⁸⁵ Valdez's rationale for his portrayal of Malinche reiterates traditional Mexican perceptions of Malinche as well as her meaning within the Chicano community. As Valdez refers to the Spanish as "white men," he simultaneously acknowledges the indigenous perceptions of the conquistadors and denotes another group of "white men." The other "white men" to whom Valdez refers are Euro-American men—those who hold power in the contemporary U.S. The double reference manifests when Valdez explains that Malinche "became assimilated." Although many standards and definitions of assimilation apply to Malinche, the word did not emerge in the colonial context. Valdez rereads the past in contemporary language; he subtly infers that Chicanas who join "the white men" are "malinchistas," or assimilated. Renewing the threat of *La Malinche* in the late twentieth-century, Valdez reinforces patriarchal gender roles for Chicanas. Not only does Malinche mean national

betrayal, but also within the Movement's context, she signifies Chicanas who pursued higher education outside of the community, embraced feminism, or married interracialy.⁸⁶ Through Malinche's body, Chicanos like Valdez policed the boundaries of Chicano nationalism for twentieth-century Chicanas.

The boundaries of the female body with which Chicanos regulated their ethno-nationalist agenda is the subject of Olga Angélica García's 1998 poem, "Selfish Woman." García's piece exposes how early Chicanismo, and the cultural contempt for female sexual "impropriety," creates generational tension between García and her father. García writes: "My father says / I am a selfish woman / a Mexican daughter / gone bad / contaminated by Anglo ways."⁸⁷ Recalling Valdez's characterization of Malinche, García retells Malinche's story in a contemporary and personal setting. Clearly, García's use of "contaminated" echoes Valdez's use of "assimilated."

Yet it is García's fourth stanza that articulates the female body's threat to cultural and national solidarity in Chicano thinking: "My 'apa / he is trying to / convince me / that I hold my value / here / in this narrow space / between my legs / he is telling me / that my worth / is something that can be broken / like an egg shell / like an ice-cream cone."⁸⁸ Expressing the vulnerability of the Chicana's "value" by comparing her body to "an egg shell" or "an ice-cream cone," García suggests that Chicano identity is at risk because it relies upon the intact sexualized female body. García's loss of (female) worth or "value" is not the immediate danger that sexual intercourse poses to her father—or her "'apa." Rather, the threat of breaking or crushing her body through sex represents the

ruination of Chicanismo, and consequently, its fragility; it can be easily “broken,” “crushed,” and, in other words, lost by women deemed sexually (i.e. culturally) careless.

García’s “Selfish Woman” points out that patriarchal authority is disruptive to her Chicana reality. Her poem, however, is not the first of its kind. The reality García rejects has been previously and powerfully interrupted. Nearly three decades before García entered the dialogue, Chicana writers and poets challenged the perpetuation of La Malinche as a label for national and cultural betrayal. Chicanas took back Malinche’s body from the literal and figurative conquistador’s bed, and did not necessarily return her to a pre-Columbian context. Emma Pérez reveals how Chicanas broke away from old and new patriarchal authority in *The Decolonial Imaginary*:

La Malinche encodes all sociosexual relations and there is no way out. Well, maybe there has been a way out. Feminists have reinscribed Malinche, with new “flesh,” with a new imagined history. For Chicana feminists, Malinche has become the powerful mother—not the phallic mother feared by modernists, patriarchal nationalists, but an enduring mother, a cultural survivor who bore a mestizo race.⁸⁹

Pérez’s frank statement that “there is no way out” of Malinche underscores the power of the myth to shape the present and the future of the Chicano community. In a sense, “there is no way out” of Malinche because she transcends all temporal contexts. Pérez supports this claim when she recalls Octavio Paz’s denunciation of the “very flesh of Indian women,” and argues that Chicana feminists reinterpret the colonial narrative and nationalist literature: “Feminists have reinscribed Malinche, with new ‘flesh,’ with a new imagined history.” In their

analyses of La Malinche, Chicanas rethink her cultural role as the mother of Mexico and reimagine her on their terms. Thus, when Pérez writes that “maybe there has been a way out of Malinche,” she indicates that Chicanas have discovered an exit from the misogynistic trap of La Malinche. They do not dismiss her, or invent a new female figure with which to identify. Instead, Chicanas fight fire with fire, turning the Malinche-as-traitor myth on its head.

Adaljiza Sosa Riddell, for example, published in 1973 one of the first Chicana poems that reconfigured Malinche’s story. Riddell breaks out of the androcentric mold by merging herself with the figure:

My name was changed, por la ley ...

Malinche, pinche
forever with me;
I was born out of you,
I walk beside you,
bear my children with you
for sure, I’ll die
alone with you

Pinche, como duele ser Malinche ...
Pero sabes, ése,
What keeps me from shattering
into a million fragments?
It’s that sometimes,
you are muy gringo, too. ⁹⁰

In two stanzas, Riddell becomes La Malinche: she is born “out of” her, walks beside her, and ultimately returns to the present by addressing her contemporary audience with the line, “Pero sabes, ése.” The éses to whom Riddell refers are the Chicanos in the Movement who maintained the belief that interracial unions betrayed the cause. Drawing upon her own “taboo” circumstance of not being

married to a Chicano, Riddell reveals that Chicano perceptions of her marriage parallel Malinche and Cortés's relationship.

Yet Riddell does not identify with Malinche on Chicano terms; she loudly declares that Chicana identity is not physically or sexually fragmented when she asks, "But you know, man / What keeps me from shattering / into a million fragments?" Riddell's question suggests that she is not the broken woman; she writes that she has been "kept" from shattering. Further, Riddell calls Chicanos white—"you are muy gringo, too"—shifting Paz's notion of the fragmented Mexicano identity back upon its author and the receptive Chicano audience. In doing so, Riddell reimagines Malinche's body not as "open" or closed, but as whole. The poem vindicates Riddell and Malinche's treatment in traditional Mexican and Chicano dialogues; it reads as a response to an audible audience, or the ongoing discourse on Malinche's supposed treachery. Literally interrupting the established perception of Malinche, Riddell stands and points Malinche's finger at those who have debased her for too long.

Similar to Riddell's work, Carmen Tafolla's 1978 poem, "La Malinche," powerfully challenges the literary and artistic traditions upon which Chicanos based Chicanismo. By becoming Malinche, Tafolla becomes the contested female body that has been repeatedly interpreted by Rivera, Orozco, Paz, and Long:

Yo soy la Malinche.

My people called me Malintzin Tenépal
The Spaniards called me Doña Marina

I came to be known as Malinche
and Malinche came to mean traitor.

They called me—chingada
 ¡Chingada!
 (Ha—Chingada! Screwed!)

Of noble ancestry, for whatever that means, I was sold into slavery
 by MY ROYAL FAMILY—so that my brother could get my
 inheritance

...And then the omens began—a god, a new civilization, the
 downfall of our empire

And *you* came.

My dear Hernán Cortés, to share your “civilization”—to
 play god,
and I began to *dream*...

 I saw,
 and I *acted*!

I saw our world

And I saw yours

And I saw—
 another.

And yes—I helped you—against Emperor Moctezuma Xocoyotzin
 himself!

I became Interpreter, Advisor, and lover.

They could not imagine me dealing on a level with you—
 so they said I was raped, used,

chingada

¡Chingada!

But I saw our world

and your world

and another.

No one else could see!

Beyond one world, none existed.

And you yourself cried the night
 the city burned,

and burned at your orders.

The most beautiful city on earth
 in flames.

You cried broken tears the night you saw your destruction

My homeland ached within me
 (but I saw *another*!)

Another world—

a world yet to be born.

And our child was born...

and I was immortalized *Chingada*!

Years later, you took away my child (my sweet mestizo new world
child)

to raise him in your world.

You *still* didn't see.

You *still* didn't see.

And history would call *me*
chingada.

But Chingada I was not.

Not tricked, not screwed, not traitor.

For I was not traitor to myself—

I saw a dream

and I *reached* it.

Another world

la raza.

La raaaaaaa-zaaaaa.....⁹¹

According to Mary Louise Pratt in "Yo Soy La Malinche," Tafolla's first line communicates more than the poet's embodiment of her subject; it has "powerful resonance for readers familiar with the Chicano literary canon" because it reflects Rudolfo González's 1967 poem, "Yo soy Joaquin / I am Joaquin."⁹² (Appendix A) González's poem was a defining piece for the Chicano Student Movement and expressed "Chicano identity in a normative male subject."⁹³

At first glance, González's "Yo Soy Joaquin" is quite similar to Tafolla's "La Malinche." Both are first person, epic monologues that establish a Chicano/a national identity. González's poem lists pre-Columbian and colonial figures that were nostalgically incorporated into the Chicano Student Movement's doctrine as models for twentieth-century resistance: "I am Cuauhtémoc, / Proud and noble / Leader of men, / . . . / I am the Maya Prince. / I am Netzahualcòyotl, / Great leader of the Chichimecas. / I am the sword and flame of Cortés / The despot."⁹⁴ All of the figures with which González identifies are male, recalling Paz's notion of an exclusively Mexicano identity. Interestingly, there is no mention of La

Malinche, and her absence becomes very apparent when González moves on to the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

At this point in history, González “embodies” a specific type of Mexicana: “I am / The black-shawled / Faithful women / Who die with me / Or live / Depending on the time and place.”⁹⁵ Although he does not truly shed his male subject position—“Faithful women / Who die with *me*”—González also announces that he is “[t]he Virgin of Guadalupe, / Tonantzin, Aztec goddess, too.”⁹⁶ Recognizing las Adelitas, soldaderas, and holy women, González exalts a Chicana ideal. Further, the ideal Chicana juxtaposed with an absent La Malinche recalls Ramón A. Gutiérrez’s claim that “the only public models open to Mexican women were those of the virgin and the whore.”⁹⁷ González’s removal and use of different female figures from Mexican history suggests that he controls the boundaries of Chicano history; he decides what and who are included in Chicano nationality, and subsequently, educates the Chicano community on national gender expectations. Thus, González’s epic poem carries a message: if a woman is not a “camp-follower,” a partner in death, or a virgin, then she is erased—made invisible in the national narrative. “Yo Soy Joaquín” does not just inspire the Chicano Student Movement, it ominously instructs members about who not to be.

Similar to González, Tafolla also resurrects figures from Mexico’s pre-colonial and colonial past, namely Malinche and Cortés. Tafolla, however, uses (and embodies) Malinche for very different reasons than why González ignores her. In Tafolla’s piece, La Malinche speaks as founding mother and *father* of a

Chicana/o nation. She trivializes Cortés's place in history because he fails to share her national vision: "You *still* didn't see. / You *still* didn't see. / And history would call *me* / chingada."⁹⁸ Suggesting that Cortés is the "chingada," Tafolla as Malinche challenges history by declaring a different definition of betrayal: "But Chingada I was not. / . . . / For I was not traitor to myself—."⁹⁹ Like González, Tafolla creates a national Chicana/o identity, but her national identity subverts patriarchy. Within Tafolla's poem, the individual emerges as the new nationalism; she writes, "For I was not traitor to myself—." Tafolla does not piece together a Chicana/o identity through a collage, or a list of previous historical figures. Rather, by re-tooling the story of one figure, Tafolla creates an independent Chicana/o nation.

Pratt, for example, explains Tafolla's strategy in summoning González's poem. By drawing on González, Tafolla "identifies her poem as an analogous foundational project, but this time for a specifically female subject and perhaps a Chicana nationalism."¹⁰⁰ The Chicana nationalism that Tafolla erects is an independent one. By collapsing the Mexican models of femininity that González keeps separate, Tafolla creates an independent history with which to establish Chicana/o identity. Pratt continues to point out the autonomous nation Tafolla creates when she writes that the first section of Tafolla's poem announces an oppositional reading of Malinche's participation in the conquest: "Malinche is seen as operating not in the service of Cortés (or anyone else), but towards independent goals of her own."¹⁰¹ Likewise, Tafolla as Malinche is also not functioning "in the service of" González's Chicano community. When Tafolla as

Malinche remembers the arrival of the Spanish, for example, she makes her independent goals clear. In-between both recollections, she repeats, "I saw our world / And I saw yours / And I saw— / another."¹⁰² "Our world" has a double meaning for Tafolla as Malinche: it reflects pre-Columbian Mexico, and the world that González creates by using pre-Columbian myths and male heroes from this era. Therefore, Tafolla's other world is not necessarily "analogous," but oppositional to González's traditional construction of Chicanismo. Tafolla uses Malinche less for nationalistic reasons than to forge a gendered sense of an ethnic community *outside* of Mexico.

Additionally, in Tafolla's poem, Malinche's "dream" seemingly echoes the visionary trope that Haniel Long ascribes to Malinche. Long's Malinche announces, "I want my country to grow, to be fine enough for all who ever come to it,"¹⁰³ and Tafolla as Malinche says, "And *you* came. / My dear Hernán Cortés, to share your "civilization"—to / play god / and I began to *dream*... / I saw / I acted!"¹⁰⁴ Tafolla and Long create a Malinche who has a vision of the future, but the future each Malinche foresees is remarkably different. Long's Malinche envisions a colonial future, dictated and realized through Cortés because Malinche goes on to say, "I rise and begin dancing without knowing why".¹⁰⁵ Long's Malinche is not a conscious catalyst for change; rather, she is the body upon which change happens.

On the other hand, Tafolla as Malinche asserts that it is Cortés who has no vision; he does not see past his own destruction, or his own world: "And you yourself cried the night / the city burned, / . . . / You cried broken tears the night

you saw your destruction.”¹⁰⁶ Malinche watches along with Cortés, yet maintains her vision of “Another world.”¹⁰⁷ As Pratt notes that Malinche “saw in her dream . . . a genuine New World distinct from the patriarchal and militaristic realities of both Aztec and Spanish societies,”¹⁰⁸ the “New World” is also distinct from the traditions of the Chicano Student Movement.

Tafolla as Malinche evokes an independently “utopian vision” of a new nation.¹⁰⁹ In this nation, Malinche is remembered as “[n]ot tricked, not screwed, not traitor,” but as a woman who reached “Another world.”¹¹⁰ Tafolla as Malinche realizes the birth of another Chicana/o nation, or “la raza.” As Pratt concludes that, “the poem’s final stanza completes the resymbolization of Malinche,” I argue that the “resymbolization” replaces Malinche’s body with the national body. In other words, the focus of Tafolla’s poem is the new world, and not the female body. Tafolla reimagines Malinche’s importance not in the flesh of Indian women, but in the vision of “Another world.”

The new nation, which does not depend upon the subordination of Chicanas, influences Olga Angélica García twenty years later when she concludes “Selfish Woman.” García independently resolves her conflict with her father:

But he does not realize
that I am unafraid
he does not know
my mother has taught me
the skill
of untangling
twisted lies

or that subversive
Mexican

wives
 have spray-painted
 graffiti
 all over the walls
 of these
 deceitful myths

he does not know
 that I am unafraid
 or that it is too late
 too late 'apa
 because
 being the selfish woman
 that I am
 I have learned
 to love
 myself. ¹¹¹

García's mother and the "subversive Mexican wives" have "untangled" the lies and "deceitful myths" of Chicano nationalism. In a sense, the works of Chicana writers and poets, like Tafolla and Riddell, are the maternal "spray-paint" to which García refers. As opposed to finding their national space in the body of another, they repaint the narrative, and reconstruct La Malinche. When García writes, "being the selfish woman / that I am," she answers Riddell and Tafolla's call not to shatter "into a million fragments," but to reach for "Another world."

Conclusion

The ways in which La Malinche was used in the twentieth-century as a marker, a body, and a tool of different national identities suggests an authorial succession. From Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco, to Octavio Paz and Haniel Long, I conclude with Chicana poets from the Chicano Student Movement. Using Olga Angélica García's 1998 poem, "Selfish Woman," as a framework in which to think about the Chicana poets reveals that patriarchal and male-centered dialogues continue to inform Chicano nationalism. "Selfish Woman" suggests that La Malinche persists as a racial and cultural traitor at the turn of the twentieth-century. The poem, however, also conveys that the times are changing for a new generation of Chicana writers due to the literary efforts of their Chicana predecessors.

The succession of artists, authors, and poets of the "La Malinche School" spans five centuries and counting. The "School" also shares another unique characteristic: for all writers and artists discussed here, it is a family affair. With Emma Pérez's notion of the dysfunctional colonial family in mind, Paz and Long's quasi father-son relationship also extends to Riddell and Tafolla's mother-daughter relationship with García. La Malinche passes through many hands. She is the great, great grandmother over which her ancestors struggle.

The family dynamic running throughout my analysis of La Malinche seems problematic on a literal level; Haniel Long's *Doña Marina (La Malinche)* was published almost twenty years before Octavio Paz's "Los hijos de la Malinche."

Yet the idea that these artists and authors are part of a family—related as they create and recreate nationality through La Malinche—exists beyond the borders of my thinking. In fact, the family dynamic and generational succession of the various uses of Malinche derives from her role as symbolic mother of Mexico. To whom or to what Malinche is mother defines the author or artist's national agenda.

Of course, La Malinche was the mother of the “illegitimate” son, Martín Cortés. Without him Octavio Paz could not have written (or entitled) “Los hijos de la Malinche;” without Martín Cortés, Haniel Long—as colonial father and author—could not become the other half of the mestizo's emergence; and finally, without Martín Cortés the “sons of La Malinche” could not enforce patriarchal gender roles in the Chicano Student Movement—the gender roles that suggest that Chicanas must “redeem” themselves from their mother's “original sin.”

How interesting, then, that La Malinche also gave birth in 1526 to a daughter.¹¹² María Xaramillo, the daughter of Malinche and Juan Xaramillo, was a “legitimate” child. According to colonial accounts, Malinche married Juan Xaramillo, who was one of Cortés's officers, in 1524.¹¹³ As Anna Lanyon notes in *Malinche's Conquest*, though the circumstances are unclear, María Xaramillo was born two years after the marriage on a voyage “back to Veracruz.”¹¹⁴ Perhaps María's existence slips through the cracks of the nationalist literature and art because her “legitimacy” undermines the androcentric dialogue. Perhaps it is because María is a *daughter*, and not a son of La Malinche. Each possibility is plausible because they challenge Malinche's fate as the betrayer of Mexico

and her people. Under a patriarchal nation, Malinche's marriage and daughter are examples of "model" female behavior the way in which her relationship with Cortés and their son are not. Recognizing Malinche's daughter collapses the virgin / whore paradigm because it exposes the binary's synthetic and contrived construction.

The recognition of María Xaramillo concludes Anna Lanyon's chapter, "mythologies." Lanyon subtly conveys that the male-centered realms of nationalism in Mexican and Chicano identity are losing ground. The female perspective embraces Malinche's complexity and ambivalence; the very qualities that the male interpreters consistently denied Malinche because they were unable to handle the complex truth. Speaking to Filomena Alvarado Ortiz, an acquaintance from Mexico, Lanyon says:

"I've been reading Octavio Paz again, . . . I remember how the first time I saw that title I assumed it meant 'The Children of La Malinche'."

"Well," she replied, "*Los Hijos* can be interpreted either as 'the children' or 'the sons'."

"Yes, so it came as a surprise to find that in this case it means only 'the sons'."

"Of course," she agreed. "But Malinche's daughters are entirely absent . . . It is, as you know, addressed exclusively to Mexican men." We sat in silence for a while.

"Do you consider yourself to be Malinche's daughter?" I asked her. She thought for some moments before replying.

"Once I would have denied it," she said, "I would have felt ashamed of such a connection. But I no longer believe Malinche dishonoured me. I can admit now to being her daughter." ¹¹⁵

Ortiz's admission is no longer one of guilt. As Malinche's myth and legend continue to grow, women have invaded the narrative; by doing so, women have

also invaded the national space, acknowledging their symbolic mother, and in turn, acknowledging themselves.

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⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Long, 4-5.

⁶⁷ McClintock, 25-26. The 1600 engraving to which McClintock refers is by Theodore Galle after the drawing "America" by Jan van der Straet (ca. 1575).

⁶⁸ Margaret D. Jacobs, Engendered Encounters: Feminism and Pueblo Cultures, 1878—1934. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999. 150.

⁶⁹ Long, 23.

⁷⁰ Hills, 129.

⁷¹ Ibid, 57.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Almon, 228.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 226.

⁷⁵ Long, 35.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 31.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 35-36.

⁷⁸ Almon, 225.

⁷⁹ Long, 21-22.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 39.

⁸¹ Almon, 227.

⁸² Paz, 86.

⁸³ Gutiérrez, 52.

⁸⁴ Vicki L. Ruiz, From Out Of The Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 106.

⁸⁵ Luis Valdez as quoted by Ramón Gutiérrez in "Community, Patriarchy and Individualism: The Politics of Chicano History and the Dream of Equality." 45.1 (1993) : 51.

⁸⁶ Pratt, 862-863.

⁸⁷ Olga Angélica García, "Selfish Woman." Las Girlfriends: Iluminando los pasos.... Eds. Lisbeth Espinosa, Sylvia V. Correa, María Díaz, and Carmela Vásquez. 2 (1998) : 16. Lines, 1-6.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 16-17. Lines, 36-48.

⁸⁹ Pérez, 121-123.

⁹⁰ Riddell as quoted in Pratt, 862-863.

⁹¹ Tafolla as quoted in Pratt, 867-868.

⁹² Pratt, 868

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Rudolfo González, "Yo Soy Joaquin." 1967. Lines, 66-70, 82-90.
http://www.geocities.com/latinas_unidas/joaquinMAIN.htm. (June 23, 2002). Please note that the poem's line breaks and spelling varies according to the different websites.

⁹⁵ Ibid. Lines, 403-413.

⁹⁶ Ibid. Lines, 423-425.

⁹⁷ Gutiérrez, 52.

⁹⁸ Tafolla as quoted in Pratt, 867-868. Lines, 51-54.

⁹⁹ Ibid. Lines, 55, 57.

¹⁰⁰ Pratt, 868-869.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 867.

¹⁰² Tafolla as quoted in Pratt, 867-868. Lines, 20-23.

¹⁰³ Long, 5.

¹⁰⁴ Tafolla as quoted in Pratt, 867-868. Lines, 14-19.

¹⁰⁵ Long, 5.

¹⁰⁶ Tafolla as quoted in Pratt, 867-868. Lines, 36-37, 41.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. Lines, 44.

¹⁰⁸ Pratt, 869.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 867-868.

¹¹⁰ Tafolla as quoted in Pratt, 867-868. Lines, 56, 60.

¹¹¹ García, 16-17. Lines, 50-76.

¹¹² Lanyon, 221.

¹¹³ Ibid, 146, 221.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 153.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 198.

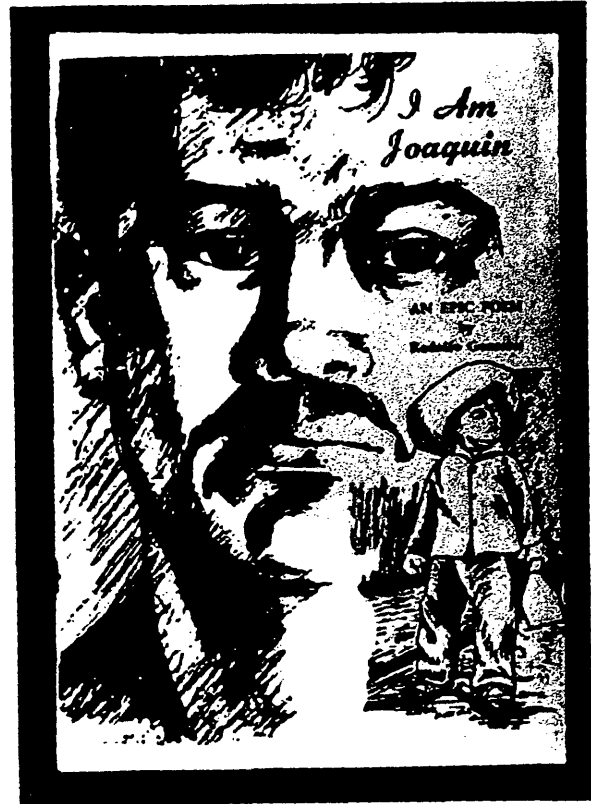
I Am Joaquín

62

Appendix A

Written by Rodolfo "Corky" González [1967]

I am Joaquín,
Lost in a world of confusion,
Caught up in the whirl of a
 Gringo society,
Confused by the rules,
Scorned by attitudes,
Suppressed by manipulation,
And destroyed by modern society.
My fathers
 Have lost the economic battle
And won
 The struggle of cultural survival.
And now!
 I must choose
 Between
 The paradox of
Victory of the spirit,
Despite physical hunger,
 Or
 To exist in the grasp
Of American social neurosis.
Sterilization of the soul
 And a full stomach.
Yes,
I have come a long way to nowhere,



Unwillingly dragged by that

63

Monstrous, technical,

Industrial giant called

Progress

And Anglo success ...

I look at myself.

I watch my brothers.

I shed tears of sorrow.

I sow seeds of hate.

I withdraw to the safety within the

Circle of life ---

MY OWN PEOPLE.

I am Cauauhtémoc,

Proud and noble.

Leader of men,

King of an empire

Civilized beyond the dreams

Of the gachupin Cortés,

Who also is the blood,

The image of myself.

I am the Maya prince.

I am Nezahualcòyotl,

Great leader of the Chichimecas.

I am the sword and flame of Cortés

The despot.

And

I am the eagle and serpent of

I owned the land as far as the eyes
Could see under the crown of Spain,
And I toiled on my earth
And gave my Indian sweat and blood
For the Spanish master
Who ruled with tyranny over man and
Beast and all that he could trample.

But...

THE GROUND WAS MINE.

I was both tyrant and slave.
As Christian church took its place
In God's good name,
To take and use my virgin strength and
Trusting faith,
The priests,
Both good and bad,
Took --

But
Gave a lasting truth that
Spaniard
Indian
Mestizo
Were all God's children.
And

From these words grew men
Who prayed and fought

Their own worth as human beings,

For

That

GOLDEN MOMENT

Of

FREEDOM.

I was part in blood and spirit

Of that

Courageous village priest

Hidalgo

Who in the year eighteen hundred ten

Rang the bell of independence

And gave out that lasting cry ---

El grito de Dolores:

"Que mueran los gachupines y que viva

la Virgen de Guadalupe..."

I sentenced him

Who was me.

I excommunicated him, my blood.

I drove him from the pulpit to lead

A bloody revolution for him and me...

I killed him.

His head,

Which is mine and of all those

Who have come this way,

I placed on that fortress wall

To wait for independence.

66

Morelos!

Matamoros!

Guererro!

All compañeros in the act,

STOOD AGAINST THAT WALL OF

INFAMY

To feel the hot gouge of lead

Which my hands made.

I died with them...

I lived with them...

I lived to see our country free.

Free

From Spanish rule in

Eighteen-hundred-twenty-one

Mexico was free??

The crown was gone

But

All its parasites remained

And ruled

And taught

With gun and flame and mystic power.

I worked

I sweated

I bled

I prayed

And waited silently for life

To begin again.

67

I fought and died

For

Don Benito Juárez,

Guardian of the Constitution.

I was he

On dusty roads

On barren land

As he protected his archives

As Moses did his sacraments.

He held his Mexico

In his hand

On

The most desolate

And remote ground

Which was his country.

And this giant

Little Zapotec

Gave

Not one palm's breadth

Of his country's land to

Kings or monarchs or presidents

Of foreign powers.

I am Joaquin.

I rode with Pancho Villa,

Crude and warm,

A tornado at full strength,

By the passion and the fire

Of all his earthy people.

I am Emiliano Zapata.

"This land.

this earth

is

OURS."

The villages

The mountains

The streams

Belong to Zapatistas.

Our life

Or yours

Is the only trade for soft brown earth

And maize.

All of which is our reward,

A creed that formed the constitution

For all who dare live free!

"This land is ours...

Father, I give it back to you.

Mexico must be free..."

I ride with revolutionists

Against myself.

I am the Rurales.

Coarse and brutal,

I am the mountain Indian,

The thundering hoof beats are my horses.

The chattering machine guns

Are death to all of me:

Yaqui

Tarahumara

Chamula

Zapotec

Mestizo

Español.

I have been the bloody revolutionist,

The victor,

The vanquished.

I have killed

And been killed.

I am the despots Diaz

And Huerta

And the apostle of democracy,

Francisco Madero.

I am

The black-shawled

Faithful women

Who die with me

Or live

Depending on the time and place

I am

Faithful

Humble

Juan Diego,

The Virgin of Guadalupe,

Tonantzin, Aztec goddess, too.

I rode the mountains of San Joaquin.

I rode east and north

As far as the Rocky Mountains,

And

All men feared the guns of

Joaquin Murrieta.

I killed those men who dared

To steal my mine,

Who raped and killed

My love

My wife.

Then

I killed to stay alive.

I was Elfego Baca,

Living my nine lives fully.

I was the Espinoza brothers

Of the Valle de San Luis.

All were added to the number o heads

That

In the name of civilization

Were placed on the wall of independence.

Heads of brave men

Who died for cause or principle,

good or bad.

71

Hidalgo! Zapata!

Murrieta! Espinozas!

Are but a few.

They dared to face

The force of tyranny

Of men

Who rule

By deception and hypocrisy.

I stand here looking back,

And now I see

The present,

And still

I am the campesino.

I am the fat political coyote —

I,

Of the same name,

Joaquin,

In a country that has wiped out

all my history,

stifled all my pride,

In a country that has placed a

Different weight of indignity upon

My

Age-

Old

Burdened back.

Is the new load...

The Indian has endured and still

Emerged the winner,

The Mestizo must yet overcome,

And the gachupin will just ignore.

I look at myself

And see part of me

Who rejects my father and my mother

And dissolves into the melting pot

To disappear in shame.

I sometimes

Sell my brother out

And reclaim him

For my own when society gives me

Token leadership

In society's own name.

I am Joaquín,

Who bleeds in many ways.

The altars of Moctezuma

I stained a bloody red.

My back of Indian slavery

Was striped crimson

From the whips of masters

Who would lose their blood so pure

When revolution made them pay,

Standing against the walls of

Retribution.

Blood

Has flowed from

Me

On every battlefield

Between

Campesino, hacendado,

Slave and master

And

Revolution.

I jumped from the tower of Chapultepec

Into the sea of fame –

My country's flag

My burial shroud –

With Los Niños,

Whose pride and courage

Could not surrender

With indignity

Their country's flag

To strangers... in their land.

Now

I bleed in some smelly cell

From club

Or gun

Or tyranny.

I bleed as the vicious gloves of hunger

Cut my face and eyes.

As I fight my way from stinking barrios

To the glamour of the ring

And lights of fame

Or mutilated sorrow.

My blood runs pure on the ice-caked

Hills of the Alaskan isles,

On the corpse strewn beach of Normandy,

The foreign land of Korea

And now

Vietnam.

Here I stand

Before the court of justice,

Guilty

For all the glory of my Raza

To be sentenced to despair.

Here I stand,

Poor in money,

Arrogant with pride,

Bold with machismo,

Rich in courage

And

Wealthy in spirit and faith.

My knees are caked with mud.

My hands calloused from the hoe.

I have made the Anglo rich,

Yet

Equality is but a word –

Treaty of Hidalgo has been broken

75

And is but another treacherous promise.

My land is lost

And stolen,

My culture has been raped

I lengthen

The line at the welfare door

And fill the jails with crime.

These then

Are the rewards

This society has

For sons of chiefs

And kings

And bloody revolutionists.

Who

Gave a foreign people

All their skills and ingenuity

To pave the way with brains and blood

For

Those hordes of gold-starved

Strangers,

Who

Changed our language

And plagiarized our deeds

As feats of valor

Of their own.

They frowned upon our way of life

Our art,

Our literature,

Our music, they ignored –

So they left the real things of value

And grabbed at their own destruction

By their greed and avarice.

They overlooked that cleansing fountain of

Nature and brotherhood

Which is Joaquin.

The art of our great señores,

Diego Rivera,

Siquieros,

Orozco, is but

Another act of revolution for

The salvation of mankind.

Mariachi music, the

Heart and soul

Of the people of the earth,

The life of the child,

And the happiness of love.

The corridos tell the tales

Of life and death,

Of tradition,

Legends old and new,

Of joy

Of passion and sorrow

Of the people – who I am.

77

I am in the eyes of woman,

Sheltered beneath

Her shawl of black,

Deep and sorrowful

Eyes

That bear the pain of sons long buried

Or dying,

Dead

On the battlefield or on the barbed wire

Of social strife.

Her rosary she prays and fingers

Endlessly

Like the family

Working down a row of beets

To turn around

And work

And work.

There is no end.

Her eyes a mirror of all the warmth.

And all the love for me,

And I am her

And she is me.

We face life together in sorrow,

Anger, joy, faith and wishful

Thoughts.

I shed the tears of anguish

As I see my children disappear
Behind the shroud of mediocrity,
Never to look back to remember me.
I am Joaquin.

I must fight
And win this struggle
For my sons, and they
Must know from me
Who I am.

Part of the blood that runs deep in me
Could not be vanquished by the Moors.
I defeated them after five hundred years,
And I endured.

Part of the blood that is mine
Has labored endlessly four hundred
Years under the heel of lustful
Europeans.

I am still here!

I have endured in the rugged mountains

Of our country.

I have survived the toils and slavery
Of the fields.

I have existed

In the barrios of the city

In the suburbs of bigotry

In the mines of social snobbery

In the prisons of dejection

In the muck of exploitation

And

In the fierce heat of racial hatred.

And now the trumpet sounds,

The music of the people stirs the

Revolution.

Like a sleeping giant it slowly

Rears its head

To the sound of

Tramping feet

Clamoring voices

Mariachi strains

Fiery tequila explosions

The smell of chile verde and

Soft brown eyes of expectation for a

Better life.

And in all the fertile farmlands,

The barren plains,

The mountain villages,

Smoke-smeared cities,

We start to MOVE.

La Raza!

Mejicano!

Español!

Latino!

Hispano!

Chicano!

Or whatever I call myself,

I look the same

I feel the same

I cry

And

Sing the same.

I am the masses of my people and

I refuse to be absorbed.

I am Joaquín.

The odds are great

But my spirit is strong,

My faith unbreakable,

My blood is pure.

I am Aztec prince and Christian Christ.

I SHALL ENDURE!

I WILL ENDURE!

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